The New Attack on Segregated Schools, P. 2

Kowalski (D. Conn.) Warns Against New Invasions and Proposes We Negotiate With Castro, See Page 3

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When the Government Lies, Must The Press Fib?

As a boy in small town America, February 22 was made memorable for us small fry by red-white-and-blue cardboard hatchets and candied cherries, symbols of the Father of Our Country, who could not tell a lie, even if the consequence were a painful loss of prestige in the paternal woodshed. Now it seems the Parson Weems story about the cherry tree may no longer be regarded as quite the right upbringing for American youth. Now it seems that no truly patriotic American, especially if a newspaperman, is supposed to tell the truth once our government has decided that it is more advantageous to tell a lie. This is the real meaning of President Kennedy's appeal to the American Newspaper Publishers Association for self-censorship in the handling of the news. Mr. Kennedy put it more tactfully. He asked editors to ask themselves not only "Is it news?" but "Is it in the national interest?" But the national interest in a free society is supposed to lie in the fullest dissemination of the facts so that popular judgment may be truly informed. It is the mark of a closed or closing society to assume that the rulers decide how much the vulgar herd shall be told.

Other Adventures In The Offing?

The President's real meaning was clearer to those who attended the two-day secret mass briefing, or official brainwashing, for the press at the State Department earlier in the week. There Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Roger Tubby seemed to be implying that the Cuban invasion might have worked if the press had not printed so much about it in advance. He wanted newspaper editors to ask themselves whether a particular bit of news might help the enemy, and to call the State Department and ask if they were in doubt. One newspaperman present who had the spirit to challenge this was Richard Dudman of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* who objected that Tubby assumed the only thing wrong with the Cuban invasion was that it didn't work. Assuming, Dudman asked, that it was poorly conceived whether it worked or not, wouldn't it have been better to have had more information and more public discussion? This elicited only a polite mumble from Tubby, an old State Department hand now back in service who shares its ineradicable view that Papa Knows Best. This was not just post mortem since Mr. Kennedy himself told the briefing that there would be other situations, not similar he hoped, when our preparations would have to be made in secret. (I see no reason why American readers should not be allowed to know this since Soviet bloc reporters present were allowed to hear it and since I was not invited I am not bound to secrecy.) This opens the wider prospect of more adventures in which we make war without declaring it and brings us to the incident over which officials at the briefing expressed the greatest irritation.

All For The Best

Sen. ELLENDER [D. La.] General, I do not want to get into any kind of an argument, but we are now in my opinion reaping a lot of trouble from things we have done in the past. Of course, I voted to build strong defenses around the periphery of Russia, and here the people are squealing like stuck pigs because of the incident in Cuba right next to our door, but we have been doing that to Russia for the past seven or eight years, have we not?

Gen. [Thos. B.] WHITE [Chief of Staff U.S. Air Force]: Yes, sir.

Sen. ELLENDER: We have built up armies in Laos. We have built up armies in Iran. We have built up armies all around the periphery of Russia, and we are bound to expect retaliation.

Sen. CHAVEZ [D. New Mex.]: We also have an air base within 150 miles in Turkey.

Sen. ELLENDER: I say, you can expect retaliation, can you not?

Gen. WHITE: I think all of these things we have done are in the best interests of the free world and of the United States.

—Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, April 26.

This incident illustrates the dangers of hastily sweeping the Cuban affair under the rug without a full investigation.* The incident was the bombing of Camp Libertad, the military airport near Havana on April 14, just before the invasion began. This bombing was covered not only by a false story but by a false plane landing in Miami. The false story, quickly scented by several newspapers, was that the bombing was done by defecting Castro airmen stationed on the field. The false plane landing story was fully told in *Time* magazine April 28. It said that the operation against Cuba started "with a surprise attack by B-26 light bombers on Cuban airports" to destroy Castro's air force. "To lend credence to a cover story that the bombings were by pilots defecting from Castro's air force," *Time* reported, "a few .30 cal. bullets were fired into an old Cuban B-26. A pilot took off in the crate and landed it at Miami. . . . A reporter noted that dust and undisturbed grease covered bomb-bay fittings . . . guns were uncorked and unfired. The planes that actually did the bombing never were seen." Officials at the briefing sessions made it clear they

*** Eisenhower who managed to go through the years of McCarthyism without ever uttering the term "witch hunt," suddenly discovers this term and advises against a "witch hunt" into the Cuban debacle. Obviously a full inquiry would also open up the story of the Guatemalan affair during his Administration.**

(*Continued on Page Four*)

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A First Hand Report from Prince Edward County, Virginia, Where the School Fight Began

Attorney General Kennedy's New Move to Enforce Integrated Education

By Marvin Caplan

History never needs much space for its decisive battles. Prince Edward County, Virginia, an area of only 356 square miles, a farming community of at most 14,000 people, may be the crucial battleground in the fight to integrate the public schools of the South. The unprecedented move by the Justice Department last week to force the county to reopen its public schools is simply the latest in a series of crises that have kept Prince Edward in the world's eye for a decade.

Prince Edward first came to national attention in April, 1951 when 450 students at the "drafty shack" that served as a Negro high school went on strike. It was an unbelievable act. There had never been a strike of any kind in the county's whole 200 years. The students refused to return to school until they were assured the NAACP would sue the county for a new building. The resulting case was one of the four in which the Supreme Court handed down its historic 1954 decision against school segregation. Prince Edward jumped back on the nation's front pages when the white community responded to the court's order to desegregate its schools by threatening to close them. In June, 1959, it made good its threat. For two years now the public schools have been shut, the school buses idle.

What White Parents Pay

Most of the county's 1,400 white students attend private classes in stores and churches in Farmville, the county seat; classes arranged by the Prince Edward County foundation and paid for by their parents. That is not as self-sacrificing as it sounds. White parents pay only about $15 per child out of their own pockets. A system of state and local tuition grants meets the rest of the Foundation's fees—$240 for each elementary school child and $265 for each high school student.

Of the nearly 1,700 Negro students, 573 go to 16 improvised centers led by 24 mothers who are at least high school graduates. Another 400 are migrant students, leaving their homes for a week, a month, a year at a time, to go to school elsewhere. A lucky handful of these, 47 senior high school students, have been placed by the American Friends Service Committee in integrated schools in 10 communities in 6 states and are almost certainly getting better educations than they would have received in the county. The remaining 700 or 800 are lost to education. Negroes have been urged by the white to accept the state grants and set up their own private school system. But the Negroes fear that would undermine their suit. And the older ones remember what wretched private schools they had before they gained segregated public schools earlier this century.

In an attempt to get the Negro children back to school, the Justice Department, for the first time in the history of the school cases, is seeking to intervene in the NAACP's suit as a full plaintiff. Heretofore Justice has appeared in the suits as a friend of the court. If the Federal District Court, which will hear argument May 8, lets the government intervene it would open the way for the Department to play a much more active role in carrying out the Supreme Court's ruling. The Department is also prepared to argue that setting up private schools with public funds is a device to evade desegregation. To the white South's consternation, the government has also asked the court to prohibit all state support of public education till the county schools are reopened on a desegregated basis.

> **"White and Negro for many years had enjoyed friendly cooperative relations. They worked well together . . . in forging a better life for both."**
>
> *—The Prince Edward County, Va., Story, published by the segregationist Farmville Herald.*
>
> **"No Negro child in this community has access to a movie, or a gymnasium or a bowling alley or a skating rink or a civil service job or any clerical job."**
>
> *—The Prince Edward County Story, by Helen Baker, American Friends Service Committee worker.*

Drastic as the government's action seems, it was inevitable. The conflict in Prince Edward is now deadlocked. While relations between whites and Negroes are superficially friendly, there is simply no discussion, a Negro woman says, of "the heavy, heavy problem on our hearts here." Two attempts to improve relations were quickly squashed. When the schools closed in 1959, a group of 40 businessmen, alarmed by the situation and the loss of trade when 74 Negro teachers and their families moved out of the community, held a secret "meeting in the woods" to discuss what could be done. But their names were noted by spies; abusive phone calls and threats of boycott ended their attempt. Later, a small group of whites and Negroes, led by a faculty member at Longwood College for teachers in Farmville, began meeting in private homes. But a threat of expulsion to the leader stopped these sessions. Small, surreptitious meetings still go on.

However, anyone hoping for a peaceful solution can draw encouragement from the restraint with which both sides have been acting. There has never been any real violence in the 10 year struggle. It is a docile population, an observer says, led by a few strong-minded men. The schoolless children have tended to sink into apathy not delinquency. Moderates of both races have remarked that the two extreme racists in the white leadership have been pushed into the background.

If the schools open in September, or whenever they open, no one in Farmville expects the violence of Little Rock and New Orleans. But Farmville can breed its own nightmares. The few white parents who favor integration fear that when the schools reopen the only ones attending will be their children, the Negroes and "poor whites." They are afraid that the Foundation, which is now building a $300,000 academy for the upper grades, may become the prestige school and the public schools, as one put it, "will be for leftovers."

Both sides have no illusions. They expect the next five years, at least, to be painful. But these years may be instructive to the rest of the South which has been watching Prince Edward and cheering it without rushing to follow its example. With a Southerner's sure sense of history, it may be that even those segregationists who hail the county as "a small voice, crying boldly" have noted a simple fact. Only thirty miles west of Farmville is Appomatox Court House, the surrender ground of the War Between the States.

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Recalls Kennedy's Own Words in Inaugural, "Let Us Never Fear to Negotiate"

Kowalski of Conn. First Congressman to Propose We Negotiate With Castro

The only professional former Regular Army officer in the House, Representative Frank Kowalski, Democrat, Connecticut, is also the first Congressman to raise his voice not only against further intervention in Cuba but for negotiations with Castro. His "extension of remarks" on Cuba in the House April 27 was generally ignored by the press. We give excerpts from it here.

"The counterrevolution failed because it had no roots in Cuba. It failed because it had no appeal for the farmer and the worker. It failed because it appealed mainly to the dispossessed. . . .

"Whatever Americans may think of Castro, he is nonetheless a living example of a successful revolutionist. . . . He won in Cuba, because he fanned the burning desire of the peons for land and reform. He has maintained himself in Cuba, because he fans the great pride of Cubans in Cuba and in themselves. . . .

We Also Failed to Starve Castro Out

"So much for the invasion which failed. We have also failed to starve Castro into submission. The sugar embargo has failed and so have our efforts to isolate Cuba. As a matter of fact, these efforts have aroused sympathies for the Cubans throughout South America and in many parts of the world. The great Yankee democracy is pictured as a heartless colossus crushing the little people of Cuba. . . .

"It has been reported that during the last invasion, great masses of people were ready and armed to fight off the invaders. Accordingly, if any invasion of Cuba by 'Social Democrats' [see box below] or any other group is to succeed, it seems quite certain that U. S. military forces will have to play a determining role. The invaders must be strong enough militarily to destroy sizable Castro forces on the beaches and in the interior. This will require the recruitment, training and equipping of major rebel invasion units. It will require naval and air support. Bluntly, it will require at least limited military intervention by the U. S. This course will lead us to horrible bloodshed and slaughter. . . .

"Is there an alternative, or must we take the calculated risk of supporting with military power a counter-revolution against Cuba? There must be an alternative. . . .

"How will we know whether some acceptable rapprochment is not possible unless we try? I am inclined to think that this government might well exercise a little restraint and patience with Cuba. Governments and regimes have come and gone in Central and South America. We have weathered storms before. Castro may be an unpleasant irritant, a thorn in our side, but I certainly hope no one believes Cuba is a serious challenge to the United States. I suggest that:

"*First,* The American people can accept the land reform program and the social and economic changes inaugurated in Cuba, providing the government of Cuba will undertake to reimburse the original owners for their properties.

"*Second,* The American people are ready to consider the reestablishment of normal trade and commercial relations between our two countries, and even to offer economic aid to Cuba providing the government of Cuba will cease its build-up of Soviet armaments in this hemisphere.

"*Third,* The American people are eager to extend the helping hand of a good neighbor and accept the Cuban people as full partners in the inter-American society of nations, providing the government of Cuba will stop to serve as a base for Soviet penetration into this hemisphere.

"I am suggesting that there is room for exploration of alternative accommodations. I am not suggesting, however, that this Nation can stand quietly by while Cuba builds up a base hostile to our way of life and dedicated to Soviet Union penetration into this hemisphere. What I am saying is that we should give Castro one more opportunity to demonstrate to the world and to the United States that he is not a tool of Soviet subversion. If he is willing to do this, he has nothing to fear from the U. S. . . .

"Mr. Speaker, before we support another invasion of Cuba, an invasion which ultimately can be expected to involve our own military forces, let us pause to ponder the words of our great President:

" 'So let us begin anew—remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.' "

If Talks on Laos, Why Not on Cuba?

"If negotiations, cease fire, and a neutralist government are preferable to war in Laos; if endless meetings and discussions on control of nuclear weapons are more acceptable than unilateral nuclear testing; if insults and abuse can be endured better in the United Nations than a clash in the Congo, then surely reason dictates, even though emotions cry otherwise, that the United States is big enough to talk to Cuba."

—Rep. Kowalski (D. Conn.) in the House April 27.

Thinks Outlook Dubious for A Counter Revolutionary Invasion by "Social Democrats"

". . . other invasions of Cuba are coming. Who will be the invaders? Reliable sources have suggested that they will be Social Democrats. Each one of us will have his own views of what is a Social Democrat, but it is reasonable to assume that the U.S. will support Cuban patriots with liberal views. The invaders can be expected to support progressive social and land reform programs. The fundamental political objective of the invaders will be to reestablish freedom and democracy in Cuba.

"The last invasion failed to communicate its objectives to the people of Cuba; and future invasions, I regret to observe, will have the same difficulties. For in a popularity contest in Cuba, Castro is the hero. It was Castro who seized the sugar lands. It was Castro who seized the banks and factories from foreigners and wealthy Cubans. It was Castro who seized the imagination of the Cuban people.

"As Americans, we hope patriots will find a way to ignite the spark of desire for freedom which could destroy Castro, but I doubt that the peons and the bearded ones can really understand the noble intricacies of a social democratic counter revolution. I must reluctantly conclude that in any future invasion as in the past one, they will remain loyal to Castro.

—Rep. Kowalski (D. Conn.) in the House April 27.

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Is It In the National Interest To Let the Government Deceive the People?

(*Continued from Page One*)

think the newspapers should not have exposed the falsity of this story. This goes beyond the standard of asking editors to ask themselves whether a story is in the national interest. It asks them to print as true whatever the government may think expedient in a given situation. It says that when the government lies, the press should fib. This is how *Izvestia* and *Pravda* are edited, but it hardly fits Jefferson's idea of a free press.

We Made A Pearl Harbor Attack on Cuba

This incident calls for further examination. A B-26 raid on Cuba's military airports is quite an operation. We still don't know the full story. Was it by Cuban or American pilots? Where did the planes come from and where did they land afterwards? Were U. S. facilities used? These are the questions Cuba could raise if the incident were ever brought before an international tribunal. We are constantly talking of the "infamy" of Pearl Harbor, but here we had a hand in a sneak attack without a declaration of war on a neighboring country with which we are still legally at peace. The false story which covered it could not hide the truth from the Cubans; they knew they had not been bombed by planes from their own airfields. The false story—*and this is the important point*—was designed to hide the truth from the American press and the American public. It was not the enemy, it was our own people, this story was intended to deceive. Was it in the national interest to let the government deceive the American people? Is it ever in the national interest to let a government deceive, not a supposed enemy, but ourselves? Down this road lies the garrison state.

What if this sneak attack were on a larger country than Cuba, with a big air force of its own, able in return to bomb our cities? What if Castro had retaliated by bombing Miami? To raise these questions is to see the danger of allowing such agencies as CIA secretly to make war on its own, in violation of law, treaty and Constitution. To raise them is to see how indispensable it is to preserve some check upon them through a free press. To raise them is also to see on how dangerous and slippery a road we are proceeding.

Nothing Ever Surprises Our Generals

Sen. CHAVEZ [D. New Mex.]: General White, you are satisfied that they did succeed in putting a man in orbit?

Gen. [Thos. B.] WHITE [Chief of Staff U.S. Air Force]: I am completely satisfied that a man orbited the earth; yes, sir. I am convinced that failure on the part of this nation to recognize the warning, the challenge, and now the possible threat contained in this achievement and in the Soviet's well-rounded and growing aerospace force, could prove disastrous.

Sen. ELLENDER [D. La.]: Have we not been doing that to the fullest extent for the past four or five years?

Gen. WHITE: I believe we have as a nation been rather imaginative about the future of space.

Sen. ELLENDER: Are you not surprised and disappointed to note the great progress that has been made by the Russians?

Gen. WHITE: I am not surprised.

Sen. ELLENDER: You are not surprised?

Gen. WHITE: No, sir.

Sen. ELLENDER: You expected it?

Gen. WHITE: We anticipated it.

Sen. ELLENDER: In other words that communism would beat capitalism?

Gen. WHITE: I thought you asked me was I surprised at the achievements of the Soviets in space, and I am not surprised at that.

—*Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, April 26.*

The danger will not be met by the currently fashionable proposal to take cloak-and-dagger activities out of the CIA and put them in the Pentagon. The danger will be worse if authorization for secret war-making shenanigans is put in the hands of the military, with the far greater resources at its disposal; in any case the Cuban affair was a joint enterprise of CIA and the armed forces. The danger lies in these "paramilitary" activities themselves on which Mr. Kennedy suddenly sets so much store. To embark on secret warlike activities against peoples whose governments we dislike, is to set out on a course destructive of free government and of peace.

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